

# CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT & GOAL

The Cambridge Public Schools will work with families and the community to successfully educate all of its students at high levels. The school system will provide all students with a safe and nurturing environment and with a core-curriculum that is rich and rigorous and which respects diversity in students' learning styles.

The Cambridge Public Schools will accomplish this mission by supporting all students in achieving the following goal: ***Excellent Instruction In Every Classroom.***

## *PROPOSED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS CONSOLIDATION PLAN*

Presented by:  
Carolyn L. Turk, Ed.D.  
Interim Superintendent of Schools

March 18, 2003

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March 18, 2003

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

RECOMMENDATION: That the School Committee approve the Elementary School Consolidation Plan as summarized below and further described in this document.

- 1) Close the Harrington Elementary School
  - a) Move the King Open School to the Harrington building and expand by one strand plus the OLA Program.
  - b) All Harrington children who elect to stay at the King Open may remain.
  - c) Estimated size of King Open 1<sup>st</sup> year is 492 plus 100 in the OLA Program.
  - d) Estimated size of school is 420 plus 100 for OLA in the out years.
- 2) Close the M.E. Fitzgerald School
  - a) Move the Peabody School to the M.E. Fitzgerald building and expand by one strand.
  - b) All M.E. Fitzgerald children who elect to stay in the Fitzgerald building with the Peabody may remain.
  - c) Estimated size of the Peabody at Fitzgerald 1<sup>st</sup> year is 554.
  - d) Estimated size of school is 524 in the out years.
- 3) The Longfellow School, including the Intensive Studies Program, be relocated to the Kennedy School
  - a) All Kennedy students and Longfellow students electing to remain in the Kennedy/Longfellow may remain.
  - b) Estimated size of the Kennedy/Longfellow in the 1<sup>st</sup> year is 559.
  - c) Estimated size of the Kennedy/Longfellow in out years is 511.
- 4) The Graham & Parks School relocates to the vacated Peabody building.
- 5) The Amigos School relocates to the vacated King Open space in the King building.
- 6) That a special open enrollment and resultant lottery conducted in conformance with the District's Controlled Choice Plan be established that will provide priority transfer rights for any student in the following schools:
  - a) King Open
  - b) Harrington
  - c) Peabody
  - d) Fitzgerald
  - e) Kennedy
  - f) Longfellow
  - g) Graham & Parks

Further, that students from the Peabody School have first priority for any available seats in the relocated Graham & Parks School.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn L. Turk, Ed.D.  
Interim Superintendent of Schools

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## BACKGROUND/SUMMARY

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In October of 2001, the School Committee authorized the Superintendent of Schools to begin a process that would result in the reduction of the number of elementary schools in Cambridge. The need for a reduction in the number of elementary schools is the result of a steady annual decline in enrollment. Over the previous five years, enrollment at the elementary level has declined by approximately 12%, and it is projected to decrease by an additional 7% over the next five years. Furthermore, kindergarten first cycle registration for school year 2003-04 has decreased by 12% over the current year. This decline in enrollment has not been uniform across the District, resulting in a wide disparity of class sizes ranging from a student teacher ratio of approximately 12:1 to approximately 20:1 depending upon the school in question. All told, there are currently over 2000 available seats at the elementary level based upon a student teacher ratio of 20:1. Just as with average class size, there is also a wide disparity in the utilization of building capacity ranging from a low of 58% of capacity to a high of 96%.

The inefficient use of our facilities has drained valuable financial resources from our educational programs and led to inequitable educational programs for our students. Since the last vote on school consolidation on December 17, 2002, we have seen a worsening of the City's, and thus the District's, financial situation. The decline in overall available revenues to the City is driven by reductions in state aid, a fact that is likely to continue at least through FY 2004-05. As the School Committee is aware, the Superintendent's proposed budget for FY 2003-04, submitted on March 11, 2003, contained reductions in the expenditure plan of \$3.8 million and assumed no school closures. The single biggest cut in the proposed budget was the elimination of 37 elementary school teachers resulting in a savings of \$ 2.3 million. The teacher reductions come from all but three elementary schools, and result in classroom and grade structure at some schools that, in our opinion, are not educationally viable, an opinion that is shared by the elementary school principals as well. It is our strong opinion that the proposed consolidation plan provides an educationally sound alternative to the strict 20:1 ratio provided for in the proposed 2003-04 budget. The proposed plan is a major step towards long sought financial stability and establishes a restructured set of elementary programs that meet the educational needs of a rapidly changing Cambridge.

## THE PLAN

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The proposed consolidation plan, which would result in a first year savings of \$4,286,048 before any reallocations, was developed using criteria developed by the School Committee (Attachment A), answers to a series of questions posed to School Committee at the January 25, 2003 workshop (Attachment B) and input from school councils, faculty and administration. In addition to solving the immediate financial problems, the plan more importantly moves the system towards improved socio-economic status (SES) balance and puts in place measures which will lead to the narrowing of

the achievement gap and improve the education of all of our elementary students so that they arrive at the secondary level equipped with the academic skills necessary to succeed.

As discussed at the January 25, 2003 workshop, we recognize that not all families will be happy with this proposal. It is impossible to consolidate a school system and make everyone involved feel satisfied. However, if we fail to move ahead with this plan, the District will be setting itself up for continuing and even larger budget problems a year from now, increasing disparities in student achievement and a further drop in the public's confidence in the District's ability to meet the educational needs of our students. For these reasons, the financial, psychological and educational cost of doing nothing far exceeds the not insignificant impact upon those directly effected by the closure and consolidation of the schools listed in this plan. The fact of the matter is we are not serving all of our children equally well. Failure to consolidate will lead to an increasing number of children not well served by our schools. In that regard, this Plan proposes to disperse proposed savings to individual school improvement plans, in addition to increasing funding at the King Open, Peabody and Kennedy/Longfellow Schools. The sections that follow detail recommendations by school.

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### **CLOSE THE HARRINGTON SCHOOL AND RELOCATE THE KING OPEN SCHOOL AT THE HARRINGTON BUILDING.**

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Under this proposal, the Harrington School would be closed and the King Open School would relocate to the Harrington building and expand by one strand. The OLA Program would remain in the Harrington building. All staffing decisions would be made by Tim Groves, Principal of the King Open School. In a significant difference from the December, 2002 proposal, any child from the closed Harrington School would be guaranteed a seat at the relocated King Open School. We estimate that the first year population of the school would be 492 plus 100 in the OLA Program. Given a relatively large attrition rate at the existing Harrington School, it is our belief that the King Open School could be managed down to approximately 420 students plus the OLA Program by the start of school year 2006-07. The reason for stating that the school's size could be managed down rather quickly is the fact that since October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2000, gross attrition from the Harrington School has been 121 students, with a smaller attrition rate of the King Open School.

#### **Reasons for Closure:**

- Over the last ten years, the enrollment of the Harrington School has fallen by 44% from 662 in school year 1993-94 to 371 in the current year. Most of this decline has occurred in the last five years where the enrollment has dropped by 39% with only 9 first cycle kindergarten registrations for next year. There is no reason to believe that the sharp decline in Harrington enrollment will not continue.

- In addition to declining enrollment, the sustainability of the School is brought into doubt by long-term low academic achievement outcomes. Since the 1992-93 school year, the Harrington School has experienced low student performance outcomes in seven out of ten years, placing the school in Tier 1 of the student performance rating scale. The achievement data suggest that despite steadfast efforts on the part of a very dedicated faculty, school-based and district-wide interventions such as Title I, Focus School Support, Extended Day activities, Parents as Partners, and the implementation of the Core Knowledge Curriculum, the school has not been able to demonstrate substantial gains in meeting the requirements of the local, state, and national curriculum.

The King-Open School was identified for relocation based on the demonstrated success of the program and the need to expand the number of available seats in an oversubscribed school as reflected by the size of past and current waiting lists. Relocation and subsequent expansion at the Harrington site will broaden the socio-economic diversity of the King-Open School. It also will make an Alternative Education philosophy choice available in the east end of the city.

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## ENHANCEMENTS FOR KING OPEN AT HARRINGTON

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Because of the inherent complexity involved in moving and expanding the King Open as well as incorporating Harrington students wishing to join the King Open, I am proposing the following enhancements:

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|---|------------------|
| <p>1) <b>Two Assistant Principals for One Year</b></p> <p>For the first year of the King Open at the Harrington building, there would be two Assistant Principals (or similar positions) at the King Open. These administrators would be selected by the principal of the King Open School.</p> | <p>COST</p>      |
| <p>Cost of additional administrator (Salary &amp; Fringe).</p>  | <p>\$ 98,450</p> |
- 
- 2) **Add a Grade 3-5 Literacy Specialist (for 2 years)**
- The Literacy Specialist would be selected by the principal and responsible for:
- Providing building-based coaching to teaching staff and site administrators on all components of a balanced literacy program and assisting in implementation and program improvement efforts
  - Actively visiting classrooms as a means to engage teaching staff, site administrators, and district administrators to identify examples of “best practices” based on local, state, and national learning standards
  - Planning and conducting grade-level meetings with teaching staff to analyze student work, review student assessment data,

- and plan for instruction
  - Conducting professional development sessions for teaching staff and site administrators in the literacy areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, the research process, study skills, and the use of technology resources
- Cost of Literacy Specialist (Salary & Fringe) \$ 61,890

### 3) Professional Development

A key component to the continued success of the King-Open School will be strong professional development opportunities and planning. The design must allow for opportunities that are: 1) relevant to the student population in the building; 2) specifically tied to school curriculum and K-8 Learning Expectations; 3) ongoing; 4) supported by district administration & support staff; and 5) evaluated regularly to ensure effectiveness in the advancement of student achievement outcomes.

Allotment for Professional Development	\$ 39,660
Sub-total	\$200,000

### 4) Facilities Renovation

The Harrington building is one of the most sound structures in the District. As a result, very little work is needed. In order to prepare the building for the fall, we are proposing a complete repainting of the entire interior of the facility at an estimated cost of \$70,000.

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## CLOSE THE FITZGERALD SCHOOL AND RELOCATE THE PEABODY SCHOOL AT THE FITZGERALD BUILDING.

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Under this proposal, the Fitzgerald School would close and the Peabody School would relocate to the Fitzgerald building. All staffing decisions would be made by Ellen Varella who would be the Principal of the relocated Peabody School. Again, in a significant difference from the December proposal, any child at the closed Fitzgerald School would be assured of a seat at the relocated Peabody School. The estimated first year enrollment at the relocated Peabody School would be 554. Again, given the attrition rates at the schools, we believe that the schools estimated size within two years would be 529 students. As would be the case at the King Open School, the Peabody School would be expanding by one strand at the Fitzgerald School.

Reasons for the Fitzgerald School Closure:

- As is the case with the Harrington School, enrollment at the Fitzgerald School is down considerably over the last ten years. While some gain has been made since the new facility opened last year, overall enrollment is down 27% since 1993. Additionally, the Fitzgerald received only 11 first cycle kindergarten choices for next year.

The Fitzgerald School was also identified for closure primarily due to low student achievement. Since the 1992-93 school year, the Fitzgerald School has experienced low student performance outcomes in seven out of ten years placing the school in Tier 1 of the student performance rating scale. The achievement data suggest that despite creative and unwavering efforts on the part of a very committed faculty, school-based and district-wide interventions such as Title I, the Miles Program, Follow-Through, ATLAS, and University & Community partnerships the school has not been able to demonstrate substantial gains in meeting the requirements of the local, state, and national curriculum.

The Peabody School was identified for relocation based on the demonstrated success of the program and the need to expand the number of available seats in an oversubscribed school as reflected by the size of past and current waiting lists. Relocation and subsequent expansion at the Fitzgerald site will broaden the socio-economic diversity of the Peabody School. It also will bring about new opportunities for a revitalized Comprehensive Education philosophy choice in the north/west end of the city.

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### ENHANCEMENTS FOR THE PEABODY AT THE FITZGERALD

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- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1) Two Assistant Principals for One Year   | COST      |
| For the first year of the new Peabody School, there would be two Assistant Principals (or similar positions). These administrators would be selected by the Principal of the Peabody School.   |           |
| Cost of additional administrator   | \$ 98,450 |
|  |           |
| 2) As with the King Open School, there would be a Grade 3-5 Literacy Specialist (for 2 years)  |           |
| The Literacy Specialist would be selected by the principal and responsible for:  |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing building-based coaching to teaching staff and site administrators on all components of a balanced literacy program and assisting in implementation and program improvement efforts</li> <li>• Actively visiting classrooms as a means to engage teaching staff, site administrators, and district administrators to identify examples of “best practices” based on local, state, and national learning standards</li> <li>• Planning and conducting grade-level meetings with teaching staff to analyze student work, review student assessment data, and plan for instruction</li> <li>• Conducting professional development sessions for teaching staff and site administrators in the literacy areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, the research process, study skills, and the use of technology resources</li> </ul> |           |
| Cost of Literacy Specialist (Salary & Fringe)  | \$ 61,890 |



3) Professional Development

A key component to the continued success of the Peabody School will be strong professional development opportunities and planning. The design must allow for opportunities that are: 1) relevant to the student population in the building; 2) specifically tied to school curriculum and K-8 Learning Expectations; 3) ongoing; 4) supported by district administration & support staff; and 5) evaluated regularly to ensure effectiveness in the advancement of student achievement outcomes.

Allotment for Professional Development		\$ 39,660
	Sub-total	\$200,000

The Fitzgerald building was fully renovated in recent years at a cost of \$18.9 million. No facilities improvements are needed.

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MERGE THE LONGFELLOW SCHOOL, INCLUDING THE ISP,  
WITH THE KENNEDY SCHOOL AND LOCATE THE NEW SCHOOL  
IN THE KENNEDY BUILDING.

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Under this proposal, the Longfellow School, including the Intensive Studies Program (ISP), would be merged with the Kennedy School and the students would be moved to the Kennedy building to form a new program. All of the students of the existing Kennedy School would be allowed to remain. Grades 6-8: The Intensive Studies Program (ISP), currently located at the Longfellow School, would be relocated intact to the Kennedy School also. The Principal of the school would be Margarita Otero-Alvarez, and she would have responsibility for all staffing issues. Staffing decisions would be made in accordance with state law, the Cambridge Teachers Association Contract and after discussion with the Cambridge Teachers Association.

Reasons for the Merger:

Both the Kennedy School and the Longfellow Schools have seen steady annual declines in their enrollment. Over the last 10 years enrollment at the Longfellow School has declined from 570 to 375, a decline of 34%. Enrollment at the Kennedy School standard program has consistently been below 300 students. The declining enrollment for these two schools is further evidenced in first cycle kindergarten registration for the 2003-04 school year with Kennedy School receiving only 7 applications and the Longfellow 15. The consolidation of Longfellow and Kennedy at the Kennedy site holds many promising possibilities. The educational philosophies of the two schools have many similarities, including their focuses on rigorous daily instruction in environments that emphasize personal, social, and academic growth. Merging the best of these programs to create a new school will better position the new school to provide a high quality, comprehensive education to all students due to economy of scale.

The Kennedy building was chosen as the site for the school because of its very good physical condition, appropriately-sized classrooms, adequate outdoor play space and staff parking.

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## ENHANCEMENTS AT THE KENNEDY/LONGFELLOW SCHOOL

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1) Two Assistant Principals for One Year	COST
For the first year of the consolidated Kennedy/Longfellow School there would be two Assistant Principals (or similar positions) . These administrators would be selected by the principal of the newly merged school.	
Cost of additional administrator (Salary & Fringe)	\$ 98,450
2) As with the King Open School and Peabody, there would be a Grade 3-5 Literacy Specialist (for 2 years)	
The Literacy Specialist would be selected by the principal and responsible for:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing building-based coaching to teaching staff and site administrators on all components of a balanced literacy program and assisting in implementation and program improvement efforts</li> <li>• Actively visiting classrooms as a means to engage teaching staff, site administrators, and district administrators to identify examples of “best practices” based on local, state, and national learning standards</li> <li>• Planning and conducting grade-level meetings with teaching staff to analyze student work, review student assessment data, and plan for instruction</li> <li>• Conducting professional development sessions for teaching staff and site administrators in the literacy areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, the research process, study skills, and the use of technology resources</li> </ul>	
Cost of Literacy Specialist (Salary & Fringe)	\$ 61,890
3) Professional Development	
A key component to the success of the newly merged Kennedy/Longfellow School will be strong professional development opportunities and planning. The design must allow for opportunities that are: 1) relevant to the student population in the building; 2) specifically tied to school curriculum and K-8 Learning Expectations; 3) ongoing; 4) supported by district administration & support staff; and 5) evaluated regularly to ensure effectiveness in the advancement of student achievement outcomes.	
Allotment for Professional Development	\$ 39,660
Sub-total	\$200,000

#### 4) Facilities Improvements

As stated earlier, the Kennedy School building is one of the District's best structures and is in excellent condition. Any modest upgrades would most likely occur using District staff on a small contract with an outside contractor.

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### THE GRAHAM AND PARKS SCHOOL RELOCATES TO THE PEABODY BUILDING.

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While some feel that the Graham and Parks building, originally constructed in 1919 and partially renovated in 1983, is currently meeting the needs of its students, it is rapidly becoming a dated structure. The reality of current and future state school building assistance funding is that there is little or no reason to believe that state funds will be available to renovate elementary buildings in Cambridge. There is already a long waiting list for approval and those schools around the state already approved are also being told it could be several years before the state has the funds to reimburse communities for the approved projects. In the case of the Graham and Parks, on three occasions this year, school maintenance staff had to respond to serious building issues, at least twice during the school day. Those issues were related to flashing on the roof being loose during wind storms (twice) and a window shattering in the green house. While none of these incidents is significant in and of themselves, they are indications of an aging building that has served us well but one that we will not be able to afford to renovate in the future. In short, while the building is serving its students today, it is unlikely to be able to serve students 5-10 years from now. The relocation to the Peabody building also will provide the school with a separate auditorium, adequate parking for staff, and improved outdoor play space. The move will also locate an alternative school in the area north and west of Harvard Square where none currently exists.

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### RELOCATE THE AMIGOS SCHOOL TO SPACE VACATED BY THE KING OPEN SCHOOL AT THE KING BUILDING.

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The Amigos School will be relocated to the King building and occupy approximately the same number of classrooms and support spaces.

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### SPECIAL OPEN ENROLLMENT WITH REASSIGNMENT LOTTERY FOR IMPACTED SCHOOLS

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Immediately after a vote to approve the school consolidation, there will be a two week period during which parents from schools directly impacted by the closure/consolidation process may request a transfer for their child. Students from these impacted schools will be afforded priority transfer right to any elementary school in the District with available seats in conformance with the District's Controlled Choice Plan. The students eligible for this priority transfer right are those currently attending the following schools:

- Fitzgerald
- Graham & Parks
- Harrington
- Kennedy
- King-Open
- Longfellow
- Peabody

This lottery will also be open to incoming kindergarten students at these schools if parents so choose.

In addition to the priority transfer rights granted to these students, students from the Peabody School will have first priority rights for any available seat at the Graham and Parks School. Notification of transfers granted will take place during the month of May. Students receiving a new assignment would not be transferred to the school of their choice until September of 2003.

Once all available seats are filled, a priority waitlist will be established for students in impacted schools who do not get one of their choices. This priority waitlist will be effect until the end of the FY 2003-04 school year. At that point, all transfer requests will be treated equally from a standard waitlist.

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## RATIONALE FOR CLOSING & CONSOLIDATING SCHOOLS

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The primary purpose of the proposed elementary school consolidation plan is to; 1) rebuild a stable district infrastructure that will, 2) both in the short term and over the long run allow for and support school programs that are reflective of the district's commitment to educational excellence and educational equity, and 3) are economically efficient. These three overarching principles must be kept at the forefront of all conversations regarding issues related to teaching and learning in classrooms, programs, schools, and the district as a whole.

The proposed elementary school consolidation plan has been designed in keeping with our district mission and goal and is consistent with the school consolidation criteria as generated by the School Committee on January 25, 2003 (Attachment A). The proposed plan also takes into consideration longitudinal student achievement data, past, current, and future intervention/program improvement initiatives, compatibility of facilities with educational needs, input/feedback from CPS principals, district leaders, city officials, School Councils, teachers, advisory councils, and concerned community members.

### *Longitudinal Student Achievement Data*

Local, state, and national student performance evaluation tools administered in the Cambridge Public Schools during the last decade include the following norm-referenced assessments: 1) California Achievement Test (CAT); 2) Iowa Test of Basic Skills (IOWA); 3) Stanford 9 (Stan9)<sup>1</sup> --- as well as the following criterion-referenced assessments: 1) Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP); and 2) Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS).<sup>2</sup> Also included is a district generated authentic assessment administered in grades 7 and 8 (Algebra).<sup>3</sup>

It is the goal of the Cambridge Public Schools to help all students meet or exceed the standards benchmark of proficient in all content areas assessed at local, state, and national levels. Consistent with the importance placed on this goal by the district, CPS student performance data included in this document has been averaged and clustered to reflect proficiency ratings of low (tier 1), moderate (tier 2), or high (tier 3). For example, a school with CAT performance ratings of 3,3,2,3, -- - MEAP performance ratings of 2,2,2,2, --- an Algebra performance rating of 3, --- an IOWA performance rating of 3 --- Stan9 performance ratings of 2,2,2,1,2,1, --- and MCAS performance ratings of 1,1,1,2, would have an average of 39 and a tier rating of 1.95 (2/moderate). The school is then clustered based on the tier rating.

Table 1 shows the difference between academic achievement outcomes across our 15 elementary schools for the 10 year period spanning 1992-2002. The results suggest academic achievement inequality across existing individual elementary school programs. Among the existing elementary schools, four schools (27%) --- Fitzgerald, Fletcher Maynard Academy, Harrington, and Kennedy -- - can be identified as having tier ratings within the low range. An additional six schools (40%) --- Amigos, Haggerty, King, Longfellow, Morse, and Tobin --- can be identified as having tier ratings within the moderate range. And five schools (33%) --- Baldwin, Cambridgeport, Graham & Parks, King-Open, and Peabody --- can be identified as having tier ratings within the high range.

Table 1

School Performance Data Review 1992-2002											
	CAT Gr.3 Rdg. 92-93	CAT Gr.3 Math 92-93	CAT Gr.8 Rdg. 92-93	CAT Gr.8 Math 92-93	MEAP Gr. 4 Rdg. 92-93	MEAP Gr. 4 Math 92-93	MEAP Gr. 8 Rdg. 92-93	MEAP Gr. 8 Rdg. 92-93	Algebra Gr. 8 96-98	Iowa Gr. 3 98	
Amigos	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Baldwin	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	
C'Port	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	
Fitzgerald	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	
Fletcher	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	
Flet/May	Na	Na	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
G&P	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	
Haggerty	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	
Harrington	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	
Kenn/Amigos	Na	Na	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	
Kennedy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
King/King-O	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	Na	Na	
King	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	
King Open	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	
Longfellow	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	
Maynard	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
Morse	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	3	
Peabody	3	3	2	2	3	3	-	-	3	3	
Tobin	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	
	STAN9 Gr. 4 Rdg. 2001 Pro/Adv	STAN9 Gr. 8 Rdg. 2001 Pro/Adv	STAN9 Gr. 4 Rdg. 2002 Pro/Adv	STAN9 Gr. 8 Rdg. 2002 Pro/Adv	STAN9 Gr. 3 Math 2002 Pro/Adv	STAN9 Gr. 6 Math 2002 Pro/Adv	MCAS Gr. 4 ELA 2002 Pro/Adv	MCAS Gr. 4 Math 2002 Pro/Adv	MCAS Gr. 8 ELA 2002 Pro/Adv	MCAS Gr. 8 Math 2002 Pro/Adv	TIER
Amigos	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	2
Baldwin	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3
C'Port	3	2	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	3
Fitzgerald	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fletcher	-	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Flet/May	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
G&P	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Haggerty	2	Na	2	-	3	Na	1	1	Na	Na	2
Harrington	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kenn/Amigos	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Kennedy	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
King/King-O	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	
King	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
King Open	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Longfellow	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	Na	2
Maynard	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	
Morse	3	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
Peabody	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3
Tobin	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Performance Rating Key							Tier Rating		1.0-1.6 = 1 Low 1.7-2.3 = 2 Moderate 2.4-3.0 = 3 High		
Student Performance Data collected, averaged and reported by the Office of Student Achievement and Accountability											

<sup>1</sup> **Norm-Referenced Assessment.** An assessment where student performance or performances are compared to a larger group. Usually the larger group or "norm group" is a national sample representing a wide and diverse cross-section of students. Students, schools, districts, and even states are compared or rank-ordered in relation to the norm group. The purpose of a norm-referenced assessment is usually to sort students and not to measure achievement towards some criterion of performance (CRESST Assessment Glossary: <http://www.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/pages/glossary.htm>)

<sup>2</sup> **Criterion-Referenced Assessment.** An assessment where an individual's performance is compared to a specific learning objective or **performance standard** and not to the performance of other students. Criterion-referenced assessment tells us how well students are performing on specific goals or standards rather than just telling how their performance compares to a norm group of students nationally or locally. In criterion-referenced assessments, it is possible that none, or all, of the examinees will reach a particular goal or performance standard. For example: "all of the students demonstrated *proficiency* in applying concepts from astronomy, meteorology, geology, oceanography, and physics to describe the forces that shape the earth." (CRESST Assessment Glossary: <http://www.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/pages/glossary.htm>)

<sup>3</sup> **Alternative Assessment** (also authentic or performance assessment). An assessment that requires students to generate a response to a question rather than choose from a set of responses provided to them. Exhibitions, investigations, demonstrations, written or oral responses, journals, and **portfolios** are examples of the assessment alternatives we think of when we use the term "alternative assessment." Ideally, alternative assessment requires students to actively accomplish complex and significant tasks, while bringing to bear prior knowledge, recent learning, and relevant skills to solve realistic or authentic problems. Alternative assessments are usually one key element of an **assessment system**. (CRESST Assessment Glossary: <http://www.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/pages/glossary.htm>)

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## SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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The benefits of organizing instructional efforts in terms of the Special Education Department would result in CPS assuming an approach that would weave inclusive practices into the fabric of the whole school environment. All students would have access to the general curriculum and each school would be accountable for providing a continuum of services and be held accountable for the educational outcomes of every student. The plan would embrace staff collaboration, shared decision making, and a focus on student outcomes as the central tenets. The coherence of each school plan would be based on grouping practices, staffing models, curriculum practices and leadership roles with the Special Education Instructional Leader and Coordinator playing a major part in the students' successes.

Given an opportunity accompanied by strong curriculum, good teaching and relevant supports, students with disabilities will meet higher expectations.

### Targeted Goals/Objectives:

- Alignment of different initiatives i.e. DIP, SIP, STRATEGIC PLAN, in an organized approach
- School would be oriented toward student achievement and cohesive standards as set forth in district learning expectations. IEP s will be written toward goals that reflect CPS learning expectations/standards that target DIP.
- Promote a strong sense of academic purpose for all students
- Build a distinctive school philosophy that defines and organizes it's inclusive instructional efforts as outlined in each school's SIP
- Develop an effective school-wide inclusive approach to literacy and math instruction through a collaborative team approach/co-teaching models.
- Provide inclusive language/literacy instruction in extended literacy blocks.
- Supplement Literacy program with structured reading approach (Lexia). Diagnostic and Prescriptive Elements will lead to development of individual student's literacy profile.
- Development of a coordinated mental health curriculum that integrates lesson on social and emotional well-being. e.g. Social Skills Curriculum for Middle Grades
- Focus on student work as the basis for curriculum planning, modification/adaptation and inclusive strategies.

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## ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Through a school improvement planning process, each school will be expected to review student achievement data and use the results to improve curriculum, programs and instructional practices. School Improvement Plans are updated annually as schools monitor their progress in increasing achievement for all students.

### EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

#### **Data analysis to**

Determine areas of program improvement  
Identify students not meeting standards  
Target professional development for teachers

#### **Goal Setting & Strategic Planning to**

Specify improvement strategies  
**Determine measurable objectives and specific ways of monitoring improvement**

### **Tier 1**

#### **Excellent Curriculum and Instruction in Every Classroom**

Implementation of curriculum aligned with Learning Expectations

**Ensuring instructional practices are researched-based and meet the needs of all students**

**Use of assessment to guide classroom instructional planning and determine the individual growth of each child**

**Ongoing monitoring of student progress through review meetings, development of achievement profiles & conferences**

### **Tier 2**

#### ***Interventions and Programs for Students Who Are Struggling***

Regular education support programs during the school day

**After school support programs at the school, district and community levels**

Summer school programs specifically targeted for struggling students

**Individual Student Success Plans developed & monitored for every student below benchmark**

### **Tier 3**

#### **Special Education Services for Students who Require Additional Support**

Development of inclusive strategies for regular classroom teachers to accommodate a wide range of learners

**After school programs at the school, district & community levels that support students with special needs**

Summer school programs that accommodate students with special learning needs

Development & monitoring of an Individual Educational Plan



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## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The proposed consolidation plan is projected to result in annual savings of \$4,286,048 beginning in FY 2003-04. The table below identifies position reductions and projected cost savings:

<b>FY 2003-04</b>	<b>FTE Positions</b>	<b>Cost Savings</b>
Elementary Classroom Teachers	(38.0)	(\$2,352,075)
Elementary Administration/Clerical Positions	(11.0)	(762,351)
Kindergarten Aides	(3.0)	(67,047)
Teacher Specialists & Technical Assistants	(12.0)	(691,135)
Longfellow and Graham & Parks Custodians	(6.0)	(307,440)
Utilities and Operations		<u>(106,000)</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(70.0)</b>	<b>(\$4,286,048)</b>

There will be an additional savings of \$205,000 in rental and operating costs when the Central Administration is moved to a vacated school building.

It should be noted that the savings from this plan exceeds the target number of \$3,800,000 by \$486,048. As was mentioned earlier, we are seeking to reallocate these funds, as well as \$1,000,000 in cuts at Central Administration (\$500,000) and the high school (\$500,000) for various improvements at the elementary level, one year administrative transition costs at the elementary level, one time early out incentive for teachers and one time building improvements.

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## SUMMARY OF REALLOCATIONS

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As the School Committee is aware, the estimated budget shortfall for the District for FY 2003-04 is \$3,800,000. As stated earlier, this consolidation proposal results in a saving of \$4,286,945 or \$486,945 more than required to cover the FY 2003-04 budget shortfall. We are proposing that the School Committee reallocate the \$486,945 in savings, as well as an additional \$1,000,000 in savings in the Superintendent's proposed FY 2003-04 budget submitted on March 11, 2003. (\$500,000 central administration; \$500,000 at the high school) in the following manner:

King Open School	\$200,000	As detailed on Page 5
Peabody School	\$200,000	As detailed on Page 7
Longfellow/Kennedy School	\$200,000	As detailed on Page 9

It is further proposed that \$486,000 in savings be redistributed to individual school improvement plans.

## School Improvement Plans

The SIP allocation will continue to consist of a base allocation, an allocation per pupil, and an additional allocation for free/reduced lunch students. Therefore, the following are estimates and the actual will be calculated when enrollments are known. We are proposing that the base amount be increased from \$15,000 per school to \$30,000 per school.

	<b>FY 02-03</b>	<b>Estimated Increase</b>	<b>Estimated FY 03-04</b>
Amigos School	27,524	31,127	58,651
Baldwin School	30,125	37,355	67,480
Cambridgeport School	25,931	33,761	59,692
Fitzgerald School	32,495	(32,495)	-----
Fletcher/Maynard Academy	27,487	26,259	53,746
Graham & Parks School	30,356	36,878	67,234
Haggerty School	22,196	25,906	48,102
Harrington School	35,315	(35,315)	-----
Kennedy/Longfellow School	26,590	61,080	87,670
King School	28,230	36,700	64,930
King Open School	27,608	57,931	85,539
Longfellow School	31,132	(31,132)	-----
Morse School	31,740	37,864	69,604
Peabody School	28,817	54,149	82,966
Tobin School	34,048	35,889	69,937
CRLS (5 schools)	146,876	168,645	315,521
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$586,470</b>	<b>\$544,602</b>	<b>\$1,131,072</b>

Finally, the remaining \$400,000 will be used for moving costs and one time facility improvements such as painting, furniture, floor tile, and the like.

### FROM:

- Consolidation Plan net savings \$486,945
- Achievable savings in Superintendent submitted 03-04 budget \$1,000,000

**Available for Reallocation \$1,486,945**

### TO:

Districtwide School Improvement Plans	\$486,945
Peabody School	\$200,000
King Open School	\$200,000
Longfellow/Kennedy School	\$200,000
Facilities Improvements	\$400,000

**TOTAL \$1,486,945**

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## TRANSPORTATION ISSUES/SCHOOL START TIMES

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This plan recognizes that changes will need to occur in the school bus route system. All changes will be done in time to allow for an orderly opening of school in September, 2003. Start times for impacted schools will be as follows:

Amigos at King building.....	Old King/King Open start time (8:55am)
King Open at Harrington.....	Old King Open start time (8:55am)
Longfellow at Kennedy.....	Old Kennedy start time (7:55am)
Peabody at Fitzgerald.....	Old Peabody start time (8:55am)

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## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION PLAN STAFFING

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The Elementary School Consolidation staffing plan is summarized as follows:

- The King Open, Amigos, Peabody, Longfellow, and Graham & Parks School staff and administrative leadership will be reassigned, respectively, to the current Harrington, King, Fitzgerald, Kennedy, and Peabody school buildings.
- The Longfellow administrative leadership will be reassigned to the Kennedy School.
- The Longfellow staff will be afforded transfer and reassignment opportunities within the school district in accordance with relevant legal and contractual provisions.
- The Harrington, Fitzgerald, and Kennedy School staff and administrative leadership will be afforded transfer and reassignment opportunities within the school district in accordance with relevant legal and contractual provisions. .
- Normal staff attrition such as retirement will result in a number of vacant teacher positions. In addition, talks have begun with the Cambridge Teachers' Association about the establishment of a one time early out incentive. The details of this potential plan will be settled prior to the April 8<sup>th</sup> vote on the plan. Other teacher placement options will be generated through the non-renewal of employment contracts for some non-professional status teachers.
- Professional status teachers who are designated involuntary transfers will be supported through resume writing and interviewing workshops, and individual and group employment counseling.
- Principals will retain the right to interview and select staff in accordance with law and district guidelines.

This staffing plan is designed to honor district legal and contractual obligations; facilitate thoughtful matches between the strengths and interests of individual teachers and the educational and staffing goals of individual schools; and maintain reasonable short and long term balance between new, mid-career, and highly experienced classroom teachers within and across schools.

Important legal and contractual considerations include *(a)* Massachusetts General Law which grants greater right to continued employment to professional status teachers over non-professional status teachers, and *(b)* the collective bargaining agreement between the Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Teachers Association (CTA) and other unions which provide agreed upon guidelines and procedures to be honored in the event of position reductions. Such agreements apply to the employment of teachers, assistant principals and certain other administrators, paraprofessionals, clerks, family liaisons, custodians, and food service personnel, currently employed within the Cambridge Public Schools.

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## IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

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After the vote of the School Committee, implementation of the Plan will proceed according to the following schedule:

### **Student Assignment Process**

- Letters Sent to Families Regarding Transfer Requests from Impacted Schools: Any School Moved, Any School Closed, Any School Merged. April 9, 2003
- Letters Sent to Impacted Kindergarten Families allowing Reassignment Requests April 9, 2003
- Last Day for Transfer Requests (Gr. 1-8) to be Received at FRC April 25, 2003
- Run Lottery and Send Notification to Parents on Approved Transfers April 26 – May 9, 2003
- Last Day for Transfer Requests (Kdgt) to be Received at FRC May 16, 2003
- Reconfigure Kindergarten Assignment sibling and proximity codes and run Kindergarten lottery May 23, 2003
- Send out new Kindergarten assignments, including ELL Kindergarten Assignments May 30, 2003
- Continue regular Kindergarten & transfer request processes May, 2003 and thereafter

### **Facilities Planning/Improvements/Relocation/Transportation**

- Meet with Principals & Staff to plan moves March-May, 2003
- Pack classrooms for moves June, 2003
- Start and complete moves July, 2003
- Complete facility improvements August, 2003
- Finalize bus assignments August, 2003
- Open Schools Sept., 2003

### **Professional Development**

- |                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Transitional Meetings          | March, 2003 & thereafter |
| • Professional Development Plan  | April, 2003              |
| • Initial Training/Team Building | April, - May, 2003       |
| • Summer Training (7 days)       | June, 2003               |
| • Opening School (3 days)        | August, 2003             |
| • Ongoing Content/Pedagogy       | Sept., 2003 - June, 2004 |
| • Summer Training                | June, 2004               |

### **Program Development/Planning**

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Education Plan Support Identification                  | March/April, 2003     |
| • Planning Process: Vision/ Setting Goals and Objectives | March/April., 2003    |
| • Assessing Existing Resources/Budget Planning           | March/April/May, 2003 |
| • Development of Action Plans                            | May/June, 2003        |
| • Implementation of New Educational Plan Components      | Aug/Sept., 2003       |
| • Program Benchmarking                                   | SY2003-2004           |
| • Teacher Focus Groups                                   | SY2003-2004           |
| • School Improvement Plan Revisions                      | Fall 2003             |
| • Assessment and analysis of:                            |                       |
| ❖ Student achievement                                    | Ongoing SY2003-2004   |
| ❖ Program Assessment                                     | Quarterly 2003-2004   |

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## CONCLUSION

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The Cambridge Public School District faces an unprecedented task. No School Committee has been asked to downsize the elementary system by three schools, without building new ones to replace them. As difficult as this challenge is for us, these issues are not unique to Cambridge. Changing demographics and difficult economic times are forcing many of our neighboring communities to confront the issue of closing elementary schools. In Cambridge's case, one of our goals is to achieve a 20:1 student-teacher ratio while in many of our neighboring communities, the school districts are struggling to keep the student-teacher ratio below 30:1. So, as we proceed through this very difficult process, let us keep in mind that while we must make changes, we are not talking about draconian cuts to education.

We must also remember that we agreed in our workshops that no matter what plan was to be put forward, not everyone will end up happy. Indeed, we experienced that disappointment this past fall when one by one individual school communities came forward to oppose what in some cases were mere rumors of the closure of their school. For this reason, it is incumbent upon us to again recognize and accept that virtually no community closed or relocated will be happy. Yet, we must close three schools; we simply have too many seats and too few students.

We must also remember that the changes that are proposed do not effect just those students enrolled today, but students yet to come. In this context we are much like a business that recognizes that in order to survive in a changing marketplace, it must reorganize. In doing so, that business recognizes that some customers will be disappointed and seek alternatives. However, that business knows that without reorganization, the business cannot grow and will eventually fail. We know that we have been losing enrollment (customers) just because of the fear of change. In that sense, failure to approve this proposal will not only lead to continued attrition of our customer base, but prevent us from moving forward to a position where we can grow our service and restore public confidence in the system.

This proposal, as presented to you, does a number of things:

1. It incorporates the principals' recommendation of last fall to close under-performing schools.

2. It terminates the uncertainty and fear surrounding closure and change and allows the District to move forward and begin the process of restoring public confidence.
3. It will allow for a modest expansion of seats in sought after schools.
4. It provides additional educational resources to schools throughout the System, not just those involved in the consolidation plan.
5. It brings us close to our goal of a 20:1 student-teacher ratio
6. It recognizes that while some of our facilities may be serving the needs of our children today, it is unlikely that they will be able to do so in the future without significant capital funds; capital funds that are unlikely to be available.
7. It saves approximately \$4.3 million.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to approve the proposed consolidation plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn L. Turk, Ed.D.  
Interim Superintendent